

*Docket No. 1759.157
U.S. Serial No. 10/808,133*

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present patent application is respectfully requested in view of the remarks below. Claims 1-8 are now pending.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Crouch et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,895,705) in view of EP 0480199 (hereinafter "EP '199"). In particular, Crouch et al. is alleged to disclose all of the elements of the claimed invention except for a fabric comprising a pressure sensitive adhesive. EP '199 is alleged to disclose a pressure sensitive adhesive which would have been obvious to use in the fabric of Crouch et al., motivated by a desire to create a fabric with increased lamination strength.

Claim 1 of the present application recites a display support capable of being printed which includes a coated fabric having a textile layer and two impregnation layers. One of the impregnation layers is located on one face of the textile layer and another of the impregnation layers is located on an opposite face of the textile layer. A varnish layer capable of being printed is deposited onto the one of the impregnation layers. A repositionable pressure-sensitive-adhesive layer is deposited onto the other impregnation layer. A protective layer is arranged on the adhesive layer and formed from a sheet possessing very little adhesive force with respect to the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer.

Crouch et al. discloses an awning sign formed by attaching a back-lit sign and awning fabric on top of a pre-dried ink layer rather than first constructing a white fabric and then applying a wet ink layer on top thereof as is conventionally done, as described in column 2 of this reference. In particular, ink is applied to a release paper and dried using warm air. A PVC plastisol is cast on to the release paper and a fabric scrim is applied thereto. After drying, a textile fabric is applied to the release paper. After calendaring and cooling, the release paper is stripped from the combined product. However, Crouch et al. does not disclose a varnish layer capable of being printed which is deposited onto one of two impregnation layers located on each face of a textile layer as recited in claim 1. Instead, ink is applied to a release paper in Crouch et al. which is eventually removed, but there is no varnish layer disclosed nor a coated fabric which is capable of being printed. Moreover, there is no disclosure in Crouch et al. of a coated fabric having a textile layer and impregnation layers located on opposite faces of the textile layer as recited in claim 1. Instead, Crouch et al. discloses a PVC plastisol which is cast onto the release paper and which has a fabric scrim applied thereto, but there is no disclosure of two impregnation layers.

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Thus, because all the features (e.g., a varnish layer capable of being printed and a coated fabric having two impregnation layers on opposite faces of a textile layer) of claim 1 of the present application, except for a pressure sensitive adhesive alleged to be disclosed by EP '199, of claim 1 of the present application are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by Crouch et al., this combination of references cannot make this claim obvious. The dependent claims are believed not to be obvious for the same reasons and for their own additional features.

Relative to EP '199, the Office Action alleges that the use of a layer of pressure sensitive adhesive and a release liner in this reference, in combination with Crouch et al., would make claim 1 of the present application obvious. A pressure sensitive adhesive layer 15 disclosed in EP '199 is aggressively and permanently tacky at room temperature and is to firmly adhere the letters of the sign formed to a variety of dissimilar surfaces as described in lines 24-30 of column 5, and line 50 of column 9 to line 8 of column 10, of this reference. In contrast, claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a repositionable pressure-sensitive adhesive layer. Thus, this reference cannot teach, disclose, or suggest the repositionable pressure-sensitive adhesive layer recited in claim 1 since adhesive layer 15 cannot be repositionable if it is permanently tacky at room temperature and is to firmly adhere.

Applicant respectfully disagrees that it would have been obvious to utilize pressure-sensitive adhesive layer 15 of EP '199 in the fabric of Crouch et al. There is no disclosure in this reference of a desire for increased lamination strength as alleged, and even if there was such a desire, the adhesive recited in claim 1 is repositionable and the protective layer arranged thereon has a low adhesive force with respect thereto, so such increased lamination strength would not be provided by the adhesive. In particular, the adhesive is not designed to provide strength between layers of a fabric and instead it is specifically designed to be separable from the protective layer arranged thereon. Further, there is no disclosure in Crouch et al. of the need for such an adhesive layer since unlike the present invention, there is no disclosure of the use of a pressure sensitive adhesive or any other method of attaching a coated fabric to a surface. Crouch et al. discloses an awning sign which is not directly attached to a surface and therefore would not have a need for an adhesive as in the present invention. Thus, a combination of Crouch et al. and EP '199 cannot make obvious the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application since the feature (i.e., a pressure sensitive adhesive layer according to claim 1) alleged to be disclosed therein is not disclosed, taught, or suggested by this reference and further, there would be no reason to combine these references. The dependent claims are not believed to be obvious for the same reasons and for their own additional features. Accordingly, claims 1-8 are believed to be allowable.

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The Office Action also rejects claims 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crouch et al. and EP '199 in further view of Bonney et al. (U.S. Patent No. 1,784,810). In particular, Bonney et al. is alleged to disclose a floor covering comprising an adhesive coating, which can be a varnish, having metallic powder in the adhesive. As noted above, these claims are believed to be allowable for the same reasons as claim 1 described above and for the additional features recited in claims 7-8. It is respectfully submitted that there would be no reason for one skilled in the art to look to Bonney et al. since the floor coverings disclosed therein are outside the field of display supports described in the present application. Thus, these claims are believed to be allowable.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at the telephone number provided.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: September 17, 2005

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